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THE NEW CHRISTIAD.

BY

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BOOK I.

ARGUMENT.

Invocation.—From the scene of the Savior's crucifixion, Satan hurries to his capital city in the infernal regions, where he assembles the Powers of the Deep. After alluding to Christ's prophecy in regard to His resurrection, Satan secures himself from all blame in case of defeat, by repeating his objections to the crime, and the opinion he had formed of the Savior's design; he then proposes to disguise himself as an angel of light, and ascend the heights of Heaven: if possible, to learn more of Christ and his movements. His associates approve; whereupon, assuming a more radiant aspect, he starts on his flight to Mount Zion.

BOOK I.

ETERNAL SPIRIT! whose mysterious hand
Fashioned a world, and from the opening gloom
Led forth immortal Man!—who, when he lost
Thy image, lost not Thy redeeming grace—
While from ten thousand times ten thousand tongues
And harps angelic on the sea of glass,
Earth's continents and farthest isles remote,
The song of praise rolls up before Thy throne,
How can my harp lie silent and refrain
From eagerness to join the swelling hymn?

Come, then, bright Muse! whose holy feet have left
Footprints in Paradise! and with thy flowers
Of fancy, plucked from those delightful banks,
A garland weave for Truth—fair Truth alone
Sole object of the strain, and sacred kept,
Unclouded by the veil of poesy.

Now had the sun behind Judea's hills
Departed, and the Angel of the Night



Stretched forth her wing, inviting to repose,
When from his blood-stained cross the Son of God,
Helpless in death, was borne by willing arms
And tenderly laid within the silent grave.

Three worlds had witnessed on Mount Calvary
The Beam from Heaven put out, our only Light!
Whose glory thus dimmed, the sun refused to shine :
The countless twinkling multitudes of Heaven
Swept down in clouds to view the tragic scene ;
While quite as numberless, the hosts of Hell,
Called forth by Satan, swarmed around the Mount
To watch his sufferings (him they dared not mock,
Aware of his divinity, lest wrath
Terrific burst) : and last, through ignorance bold,
Mankind, a few except, reviled his death.

But all was over now : and the pale stars
Looked down with kindly love on sinful man,
Just as they did on that serenest night
When God called Abraham forth to number them.
His covenant had not failed—the Promise came !
Unchanging God ! no power could change Thy plans.

The moment Jesus died, the angel watch
Retired, with softer lays ; but in their hearts



Expectant joy already conquered death.
The noisy brood of demons to their prison
Departed in confusion, like a band
Of lawless soldiers bent on sacrilege.
These to their Hell : the human fiends to their's—
A restless pillow and a guilty dread.

All except Satan : on the Mount alone
Stood the dread angel in perplexèd thought,
When all around was still : and to himself,
As to a friend, he in deep muse thus spake :

“ Did not the sun his radiance turn aside
From such a scene, as better in darkness hid ?
The solid temple in Jerusalem
Shook, and the costly veil was rent in twain
By unseen fingers : rocks, disparting, yawned
As by a shock of earthquake, and the graves
Of many saints were opened. Hence I fear
The pillars of my kingdom have been shaken
By more than mortal foe ! What kind of man
Was this, and is he vanquished e'en in death ?
Deep in my heart Suspicion builds her nest
To hatch a myriad brood of anxious fears.
Yea, now my sharpest cunning must avail
To pierce this secret, all else left undone.”



So saying, he prepared for hasty flight
His spreading wings : rose from the tragic Mount,
And like a sable whirlwind swept away,
Bound for the gates of death. Those iron bars
No more are closed ; but at his dark approach
Yawn wider, who first oped them to our woe.
Far down the abysses, horrible and vast,
Where mildewed rocks dripped poison and the air
Was foul from pestilential fogs and clouds,
The darting spirit found his devious way.
A straighter flight impelled him o'er the sands
Of a broad desert, vacant of all life,
Too desolate and barren for the foot
Of even such a spirit. This he crossed :
And now the waters of the Stygian lake
Lay dark and motionless before his eye.
He rested for a moment on the strand,
Then poised his wings afresh and faster flew
Across the dead expanse. The opposite shore
Loomed into view. Thereon a mountain stood,
Upheaving rolls of smoke and lurid flames,
Whose flickering light, reaching far down the coast,
Revealed the sombre regions of the dead
In all their startling horrors. On the mount
Satan triumphant stood : a kind of pride,



Born of despair, lighting his spectral face,
As in the dusky vale beyond he saw
His capital city, Pandemonium,
Studded with twinkling jets. The fallen host
Beheld their chief descend the mountain-side ;
And with gay pageantry and noisy pomp
Attended, was the Great Apostate led
Before his stately palace. With thick clouds
Encompassed, and though wrapped in sheets of flame,
Above them all the central dome rose high
In majesty, as if defying Heaven.

Ascending to his throne, at once the King
Of Darkness sped his messengers in haste,
To summon from all quarters of his kingdom
The Powers of the Deep ; and they on wings
As swift and dread as tempest-clouds at sea,
Gathered at Pandemonium, by the sound
Of echoing trumpet guided, sign of war.
These round their champion closed . beside what else
Of lesser note could gain the council hall :
Messengers, city-idlers, spirits from the Earth—
A Babel of words and brush of settling wings,
Subsiding to a hum—then silence reigned ;
Which Satan perceiving, he as promptly rose,
And with heroic gesture thus began :



“ Powers of Hell! obedient to my call
Ye from the four winds of the Deep appear
At solemn synod—where I trust my words
Will find acceptance. Marvelous things occur
To urge this haste, and claim our earnest thought :
For our great Enemy, who late hath walked
Judea, and repentance preached to men,
Is crucified and buried. Yet he said,
‘After three days I rise again.’ Ye saw
How all his other sayings came to pass,
And know my vote was to prevent his death
By all means possible, hearing this speech ;
But ye opposed, and clamored for his end.
Against my better judgment I inclined
The heart of Judas to betray his chief,
Conforming to your wishes : so that blame,
In case of our defeat, falls not on me.
Though man, he was—God ; nor do I judge by death
Him vanquished : but by that mysterious means
Perchance he works new mischief in our state.

“ Hear, then, what I propose : Myself will climb
To where Mount Sion overlooks the vale
Of Paradise: and there, commanding view
Of what transpires, and listening what is said,



May gain some sudden knowledge of much use
In this our war of cunning, not of might ;
And, though the hidden purpose of his death
He may not suffer us to know, our hearts
Will be exempt from some uncertainty.
The angels will not pierce my deep disguise ;
And he that allowed me to escape my cell
And venture forth to taint his new-made world,
Will hardly deign to cast me from those heights :''

Satan ended, yet the stillness was prolonged :
The doomed immortals sat lost in dismay
Before his bold design. As, ere the storm,
A death-like silence broods o'er nature's face :
The leaves are still, the air devoid of life,
Till with a sudden start the earth and sky
Are shaken by the tempest—so from these,
Awhile confounded, burst approving shouts.

And now behold a miracle of power
Wrought by the Dragon—he to whom is given
Power and great glory in the Earth and Hell :
An angel form, with garments white as light,
Appeared before the throne, his spiry wings
Poised lightly, and prepared for instant flight.



At once the council, terror-struck, fell back
Before this dreadful messenger of wrath
Sent by Almighty God (such their belief) ;
But Satan, rising from his throne, called forth
Beelzebub, and gave his last commands :
On him conferred the present cares of state
(Since none with stronger wisdom could support
His government, and push the wily Scheme):
Then without more delay, but prouder steps,
Approached his bright delusion. Watched by all,
He gave no sign : but as a drop of water,
If it but touch a kindred drop, will spring
To eager union—so the King of Hell,
Reaching the phantom, by his spirit-power
He entered it quick as the lightning's flash ;
And thence infusing life to all its parts,
Like a swift dart into the frowning sky
He sped, and left the host wondering below.
Instant the swarming multitude of spirits
Took wing, with thunderous shouts ; but vainly strove
To see him well attended on his way,
For he on sweeping pinions borne aloft,
Soon disappeared within the closing gloom.



BOOK II.

ARGUMENT.

Satan, throned on Mount Sion, beholds the glory of God and the celestial multitude.—The music of Heaven draws from him tears; his various emotions described.—The heavenly Eden.—Israfel is first recognized, amused with his harp.—The Prophetic Sanhedrim.—The Army of the Redeemed: Satan, for the first time, hears their song; the angels marvel and listen.—Elijah's chariot.—Satan discovers, in the Orb of God, a vacant throne.—The ascension of Christ: the angels celebrate it in a hymn of triumph.

BOOK II.

THE sun, the moon and stars beneath his feet
Twinkled like particles of dust that cross
The pathway of the sunlight ; yet unchecked,
The bright-robed Angel on his way aloft
Paused not, but added swiftness to his wings
And vigor, as his spirit rose with hope :
Till through the boundless blue his eye discerned
Far off the Mount of God, whose top was clothed
In soft white light. Majestic, silent, grand !
How awful seemed the Mount, how much like God !
Washing its hallowed feet and murmuring low,
The River of Life, a broad and bright expanse
Of dancing water, happy as a child,
Flowed onward to dispense its blessings rare :
While from the opposite shore the mystic strain
Of Heaven's music floated o'er the waves.

High on that glittering mountain peak the King
Of Darkness rested from his daring flight,
Folded his snow-white wings, and made his seat
The highest pinnacle : from thence with ease
Commanding view of utmost Paradise.



How dared he thus wander on holy soil,
Presumptuous? But twice before he came
(A bold accuser) with the sons of God
When they appeared before the sovran throne.
Shame and defeat he suffered; now once more
Allowed, with feet unsanctified, to touch
The sacred Mount, that God might bring before him
The panorama of his coming doom.

At once the great white throne burst on his view
With overpowering splendor—but his eyes,
Long used to darkness, could not bear the glory
Of him that sat thereon. Yet, blinded thus,
He saw the bright illimitable host
Of seraphim go whirling on their way
Around the throne, bathed in its falling beams:
And as with fingers light they swept their harps,
The dear, familiar song of long ago,
Wafted by dreamy winds across the waves,
Fell on his pensive ear. That far off song
With such unearthly sweetness filled his soul,
That, overcome, he slowly bowed his head
And melted into tears! From Memory's halls
Forth came a long procession of sweet thoughts
And dearest recollections; but their voices



Chanted of days forever gone, no more
To soothe his soul. But yesterday it seemed
Since he in radiant majesty sat throned
Among those jewelled spirits, hovering round
His high pavilion, crowning him with flowers,
But yesterday it seemed—and yet how vast
The widening gulf between! how full of black
And threatening terrors, horrid consternation,
Misery, pain, remorse! Never till then
Had he perceived the wretchedness and loss
Of his estate, how vain his puny wars.
“A place of rest to lay my fevered head
How welcome! (thus he sighed) my soul is driven
By whirlwinds of tempestuous wrath: and hope,
Her light extinguished, hath left me forlorn
To founder in the deep! If Death, my son,
Could quench his dart within my surging spirit,
Gladly I would exchange, for that great calm,
The cares of empire and my steadfast hate.”
Again, prone on the holy Mount, he fell
In anguish deep and shed most bitter drops,
Forgetful of his mission to search out
The secrets of the sky—till haughty Pride
(Foe of the Spirit, keeping human hearts
From worshipping Jehovah) checked his grief.



Now the sweet song inducing him to tears
Arose to a sublimer strain, till all
The vast recesses of the imperial arch
Shook with triumphant music! Bolt upright
The listening Outcast reared, and held his breath
As the wild inspiration seized his soul ;
But as the sacred anthem higher rose
And grander still, a moment he forgot
His lost condition—spread his mighty wings
For eager flight, and would have passed the gulf :
But that almighty Will, which overrules
And gives a bound to evil, interfered.
In feverish impatience, then, he rent
His gaudy robes : vexation and despair
Pressed on him with such fierceness, that he sank
Exhausted from the conflict.

Now 'twas past.

And sullen resignation to his fate
Subdued his soul to calmness. First he fixed
His thoughts upon the exploit for which he came
Thus far from Hell's dark valley—then upraised
His eyes, observant of the wonders round.

As the bright orb of day forever shines
In the pure sky, and pours his radiance down



Wide o'er the smiling earth—so the great throne
Of God, enshrouded in eternal glory,
Forming an orb of light, sheds holy beams
On all beneath. Blessed are they that feel
Its constant influence breathing on their souls!
Gathered in mid-air moves a countless throng
Of starry seraphim ; while far below
Lie spread the sweet hills and blooming vales of Heaven.
There wander happy spirits seeking blest
Retirement in the mystic groves, and pluck
Immortal fruit ; or lie on twilight banks
In quiet meditation, where the stream
Pours out its dreamy music o'er the rocks.

What various scenes were witnessed from the Mount
By the improper tenant there enthroned,
Celestial Muse ! thy memory best can tell.

Within a bower of overshadowing leaves,
His sylvan temple, dedicate to song,
Sat Israfel, who has the sweetest voice
Of all the angels. Him the King of Hell
First recognized—with head and eyes upcast:
His bright companions, pensive in that hour,
Around him, and attentive to his harp,
As though well pleased. How oft in happier days



Had Satan, sitting at his feet, been charmed
With many a wild romance angelical,
Or dim poetic legend of the skies !

Like piled-up banks of snow-white clouds, at rest
Above the setting sun, suffused with gold,
Far off upon the plain arose to view
A group of thrones, and they that sat thereon
Prophets of old, whose flaming tongues had once
Foretold a coming Saviour. Abraham there,
Presiding in magnificence, shone forth
Far brighter than the morning star ; his wings,
Spread wide in silent grandeur, hovered o'er
The awful synod, whose calm, dreamful eyes
Were upward gazing with a soft delight
On his resplendent beams. Like incense rising
From off an altar, from that sacred throng
The rolling hymn ascended, blent with strains
Of low, impressive music, up to God.
Long time was Satan's gaze intently fixed
Upon their saintly faces, lit with love :
The starlight on his forehead once as bright,
Now gone forever ! Ah, can he forget,
Though scenes of new beauty draw his eyes away ?

Far distant, in a valley dim, he saw
Unnumbered armies of celestial spirits,



Clad in white robes and palms within their hands,
Watched o'er by Moses with most tender love.
In meekness at their head he wandered forth,
And led them, as a shepherd doth his flock,
Through pastures green and by the shadyside,
Where springs of joy ineffable o'erflow.
As the great host advanced with mighty shouts
And harpings, a new song was heard in Heaven—
The SONG OF THE REDEEMED! Wondering sat
The spirit from Hell, and bent his listening ear
To catch the notes, now dying faint away,
Now sweeping full and clear adown the wind.
Nor less the seraphic minions wondering heard
The hallowed strain : they, ceasing from their flight,
Looked on each other with a vague surmise ;
Then, circling in descent, their sparkling feet
Alighted on the crystal mountain tops.
From thence benignly did they view the host
Of human spirits, by the atoning blood
Of Jesus sealed ; till their aspiring love
Burned upward with such force that, drawn aloft,
They spread their far-reaching wings and whirled away.
Wrapt in ecstatic joy! The envious eye
Of Satan marked their flight : thence roving wide



Beneath the throne, a sight sublime he met.

Like some bright comet speeding on its way
Through the eternal space, and shapes its path
Among the crossing multitudes of stars—
So now appeared, far on the outer verge
Of Heaven's arch, Elijah's chariot
And fiery steeds. The prophet on his car
Triumphant sat, and by his eager side
Adam, the first of humankind. A cloud
Of cherubs flew before with trumpets raised,
The whirlwind followed gayly. Rumbling sounds
Like distant thunder jarred along the skies,
As they with headlong fury swept away
In quest of new-born worlds. O boundless longing
Of the deep spirit to explore at will
The never-ending realms ! Infinity
Alone will satisfy the human soul.

From his exalted mountain seat once more
The King of Darkness raised his eyes, and strove
To pierce the blinding glory of that Orb
Within whose burning center is ensphered
The triple throne. Twice he essayed the task
And failed ; the third time penetrated keen



Its awful depths—instantly withdrew his eyes !
But in that glance he saw enough to shake
His soul with terror—for lo ! the second throne
Was vacant of its Lord—a part of Godhead gone !
The sudden revelation so surprised
The impure angel, that an icy shaft
Of horror chilled his heart ; a heavy dread
Of coming wrath appalled him ; but he strove
To roll the burden off by watching close
The changing panorama spread below.

As oft, before a tempest, Nature seems
Uneasy, and her ocean-waters fret
In choppy waves, impatient at the pause—
So now the busy angel host appeared
In expectation of some great event
Just on the eve of happening. Two and fro
In quick excitement glaced the twinkling spirits,
Happy in their thoughts. This deep impressed
The spirit from Hell ; and as with narrow eye
He watched their evolutions, filled with doubt,
Two angels from before the throne of God
Descended to the Earth on rapid wing.
Scarce had they disappeared, ere from a group
Of seraphim that circled near the top



Of a white peak, rose one, a brighter spirit
Than were the rest, and neared the flashing Orb :
Whom Satan recognized as Gabriel
Less by his trumpet than his noble daring.

As the gay skylark, of ambitious flight,
In upward springing, with excess of rapture
Flutters and sings—so Gabriel, nearly lost
To sight within the radiance of the Orb,
Exulting, poured his song. With sudden wheel
He dropped obliquely from that dizzy height,
Earthward his graceful course. As by the verge
Of Heaven he passed, a choral hymn arose
From vast assembled voices, like the sound
Of ocean when it thunders on the strand :

“ Alleluia ! worthy is the Lamb,
That brought salvation to the Earth and dipped
His vesture in blood, to come with Heaven’s clouds,
And sit down at the right hand of our God
In flames of glory ! ”

Thus they their pæan sung :
A better Christiad than the feeble voice
From Earth can lift—and golden silence dawned :
Whose daybreak to the sight of angels brought



The bright schechinah, like a pillar of cloud,
Suddenly built between the Earth and Heaven—
A royal stairway for the Prince of Peace
Returning to his Father! Never the sun
Broke through a storm-cloud to illumine the Earth
With such a smiling radiance, as that shaft
Of sacred light, proceeding from the throne,
Made all things with supernal glory shine.

Expectancy in Satan rose so high,
That, like a frail bark on the tempest-wave
Exalted beyond itself, he, breathless, stood :
Till from the deep abyss on hurried wing
Rose Gabriel, and his lifted trumpet blew—
The mighty blast echoed far o'er the plains
Of Paradise, and every kingdom awed
To silence in that holy clime. The songs
Of Heaven ceased, all harps were cast aside,
And the assembled millions reverent stood
To witness Christ ascending from the Earth.

The seven lamps that burn before the throne
Now beamed with greater brightness, and the hue
Of the white pillar of light grew more intense,
Till through that shaft angelic eyes beheld
The glorious vision of the Son of Man
Coming with clouds, who in their rolling folds
Rose, dreadfully serene, with upstretched hands,
And steadfast eyes fixed on the eternal throne.



Oh! such unearthly sweetness in that look
Was manifest, such depth of love divine,
The awful mystery of atoning grace,
God reconciled to Man, and both at peace,
The angels could no more endure the sight,
But turned—and by their silence showed their love.

When Christ had risen to the pillar's height,
And entered the joy-irradiating Orb,
Such glory from it flooded over Heaven,
Innumerable white wings their pointed spires
On high upreared: thus covering from the excess
Of rapture visible, faces of wondrous light!
Seraph and cherub in prostrate attitude
Fell forward on the jasper pave to worship
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, crying,

“Alleluia! honor, and glory, and blessing,
Be with our God, the Spirit, and the Lamb,
Once dead, but now alive forevermore,
Amen, and holds the keys of Hell and death.”

And again they said, “Alleluia!” As the deep
Roars sublime, or dreadful voice of thunder,
Jarring the solid heavens on its way
Far down the arch—so came the jubilee:
O'erflowing first the prophets, whelming all



The redeemed of Christ, and ocean-like swept on,
Till the far kingdoms of the starry plain
Took up the song, and faintly wafted back
The sound of "Alleluia." Long that hymn
Will be remembered, not by God alone
And his resplendent myriads, but by Satan,
The darkest mind in all the universe,
Who on his mountain trembled at the strain.

What then transpired in the bright flashing Orb
No eye in Heaven beheld : communion sweet,
Beyond all grasping of created mind,
Doubtless the cause of the dilated Sphere.

Awful seclusion of the ador'd Three !
Deliberate Trinity : can thought for Man
Intrude to thy recess ? Yet from the Orb
Came Jesus, in his countenance such beams
Of holy love, as far transcends the power
Of utterance. Most benignly he advanced
Among the archangels, who, majestic poised
Around his kingly presence, offered love
And greetings manifold. With hastening steps
He then descended to the blissful plains,
And mingled with the joy-crowned human host.

There Moses, in the solemn forms of Heaven.
With all the angels round, gave up his charge.

BOOK III.

ARGUMENT.

A trumpet giving the signal, the angels gather about Messiah's chariot, and conduct him forth, on his way to prepare a place for his redeemed people.—They halt at the scene of Heaven's rebellion.—Christ destroys the throne of Satan, and converts the desolate battle-field into a beautiful garden.—The city of New Jerusalem rises therein, illuminated by the Orb.—The angels enter its gates with great rejoicing.—Some of its beauties described.—The judgment-throne appears, with Christ glorified thereon.—The crowns for the saints are woven, the jewels placed within them, and put away till the resurrection morn : one fairer than the rest.—The departure from the city, whose glories are guarded against evil spirits, and reserved till Christ shall have put all things under his feet.

BOOK III.

SOON from a lofty mountain peak was heard
The sound of a great trumpet, and a voice
Proclaimed in Heaven, saying, "Go ye forth,
Armies and legions of the living God,
Attendant on Immanuel ; for he builds
A radiant City, where his saints, redeemed,
May dwell with him and reign forevermore."

No mortal tongue could number forth the powers
And kingdoms vast which, at the summons heard.
Around the King of Glory drew with shouts
That shook Heaven's base, and in procession bright
Led forth the great Redeemer. Calmly throned
Within his blazing chariot, and robed
With omnipotence, he moved in all his strength
Majestic, to the sound of trumpets blown,
And many voices glorifying God.

Far on the right-hand verge of Heaven a plain
Lay wild and desolate, where yet the marks



Remained of that tremendous battle, fought
When the defeated Angel and his host
Were headlong hurled from Heaven. Golden wheels
Of chariots, broken spears, and armor crushed,
Were scattered wide along the waste ; a throne
Stood in the center, black and lightning-scarred.
There Satan, in the pre-demonic age,
Had swayed the scepter o'er a realm of spirits ;
But since his fall was left for angel eyes
To view, and learn discretion from the sight.

The long procession, glittering, thither marched :
But, ere they reached it, King Immanuel paused,
His followers halting also to await
His blest commands. Then from his chariot seat
Slowly he rose : and, lifting up his eyes
To the unclouded Orb, these words benign
Pronounced :

“ O Father ! for this happy hour
I thank thee, to whom praise is due : thou knowest
I have obeyed thee always, and thy will
Hath been my joy. Now glorify thy Son ;
And let these spirits of our peaceful state
Behold thy judgment on the works of Hell.”

At once a Voice came from the burning Orb :
“ Thou art my well-belovèd Son ; in thee



My wishes all I find fulfilled : do thou
As seemeth best, for thee have I sent forth."

Then Jesus, turning to the concourse, spake
With kindly voice, but full of warning grave :
" Fear God, and give glory to him ; for, lo,
The hour of his judgment is come. Your eyes
Behold the desolation of the wicked ;
But from henceforth no more shall Satan's throne
Be seen among you. I am come to destroy
His habitation, and in place thereof
A City raise, where my exalted saints
In one long reign of bliss with me shall dwell."

He said ; and stretched on high his mighty arm.
Dark clouds obeyed, and gathered o'er the plain
Their mass'd blackness—from their bosom sent
The triple dart, whose crimson terrors flying
Against the throne, a crash was heard in Heaven.
So loud, it spread amazement through the host :
And the vast fabric disappeared from sight
In hideous confusion—so a ship
Will founder in the night, when whirlwinds sweep
The angry sea, and flash the blinding flames.

Rushing at once came from the new-made void
Volumes of pitchy smoke, as from a furnace,
Extending far, and clothing all the sky



In somber pall. Around Messiah's car
The angels gathered close : and, as they stood
O'ercome with awe, but mindful of his care
And watchful goodness, high above their heads
In the dark heaven appeared a Cross of blood ;
And from its center shone a silver Star,
Which, widening, dispersed a glory round ;
And from the glory came a whiter shaft,
Descending through the darkness. As it grew
With fast increasing splendor o'er the void,
Sweet sounds came from the Orb—as though the God
Who music made, himself had touched the threads
Of some unseen and never-dreamt-of harp,
Tuned to high themes, and strangely all unlike
Music of Earth, or Heaven, or march of worlds !
.... Fixed in deep muse, alone with his great thoughts,
And hymning to himself their meanings dark,
Which none, the highest in Heaven, were fit to share.

While angels wondered, to that prelude soft
An airy City, rising from the void,
Unfolded all her beauty like a flower,
And stood revealed. Whiter her palaces
Than purest marble, and her twinkling domes
More bright than sapphire of the rippled sea.
Softly illuminated by her God,
She needed not the light of sun or moon
To shine upon her streets ; she sat the Queen
Of Heaven, and NEW JERUSALEM her name.



Stretching for leagues around, the rolling hills
Of Heaven rose, their summits touched with silver :
Which Saint John seeing, thought a sea of glass.

The waiting host, with sound of trumpets loud,
Of cymbal and theorbo, forward wheeled
Their wingèd steps before the imperial car,
And, entering through the high-arched gates of pearl,
Flew up the glittering streets. Admiring eyes
They turned on all the beauties of the scene,
For with no sparing hand had God disposed
His new creations. Round the Tree of Life,
Already blooming by the tranquil waters,
Gathered the bannered millions ; and from thence
Was offered up a solemn ode of praise
To the Great Architect whose bounteous hand
Had reared that lasting residence for Man.
Dispersing then, each took his chosen path
As fancy led, to inspect the glorious work ;
And at each unexpected beauty paused
In sweet surprise, and filled with happiest thoughts.

The Cross above the City, on whose breast
The Star of David lay, had with its beams
Dispersed the transient darkness, and now light
From the great Orb of God fell clearly down
Upon the recovered plain. The City lay
Beneath its happy luster like a gem



Sparkling intense, her myriad palaces
And lofty domes reflecting back His beams.
Serenely flowing, silent as a dream,
Transpicuous and clear, the Stream of Life
Wound through the City's midst and passed far out
Atween the verdant slopes. Its bosom smooth,
Unruffled as a mirror, caught the forms
Of fairy images along its banks,
And, softly inverted in the twilight tide,
They viewed their loveliness. On either side
The mystic River bloomed the Tree of Life ;
Nor wanted aught of blossom or of leaf
To magnify her beauty. Fair her fruit,
Delightful to the taste, and, noble thought !
Her leaves were for the healing of the nations.
Not here was room denied for spacious vales
And solemn forest walks, amid whose aisles
Was heard the music of the white cascade
Soft-dashing o'er the steep : and echoes strange
From sylvan grottoes hung with mossy fern.
At pleasing intervals a garden bright,
Lucent with jewels, to the Earth-tired soul
Whispered of Rest. The lily and white rose
There twined in loving friendship, and all flowers
Of spotless purity their incense gave
To the delightful winds. Cool fountains poured



Their lucid waters into crystal urns,
So delicately broidered that it seemed
Their ruin e'en to touch them. Joyous birds
From spray to spray, in innocence of mirth,
Flew, busy with their sport : or swayed aloft,
And poured their glad notes on the vernal air.
Immortal home ! yet these the least of all
Its joys : for Fellowship is the soul of Heaven.

The angels wandered through these blest retreats
In admiration pure : but when they reached
The central Square, astonishment and awe
Checked suddenly their steps : for now, behold !
The impressive vision of a great white throne,
Whose slender spires were in the cloudless arch
Sublimely lost. Around it, all ablaze
With apostolic symbols, and expressing
The central figure, though in less degree,
Twelve thrones, for Israel's judges, proudly stood.

After a thunder-storm, how oft we see,
Clear-cut and sharp against a violet sky,
Some great white mass of clouds, in dazzling light
Unfold its beauties, till the musing mind
Can fancy, that from plains of silver rise
The minarets of oriental cities :
Or toppling mountains, half-way up whose heights
Dissolving castles fade before the eye.



So now appeared the vision of the throne,
Amid whose clouds one like the Son of Man
In peerless grandeur rose, his love-bright face
Tempered by shadows, lest the beholding throng
Should perish in his rising. From those clouds
The voice of Jesus came in well-loved words :

“ Many of them that slumber in the dust
Shall waken, some to everlasting life,
Some to contempt and shame. They that be wise
Will shine as the brightness of the firmament,
And they that turn many to righteousness,
As the stars forever and ever.”

Then a spirit
From underneath the throne uttered his voice,
And summoned the angels to the pleasing task
Of weaving crowns for the redeemed to wear.
Gladly their toil began, and round them rose
Crowns of pure gold, wrought in exquisite lines
Of filigree, where oft the wearer's deeds
In bright succession glowed ; or, lacking deeds,
Compassion, quick to hide the fault, supplied
Emblems of beauty, such as delicate flowers,
Or trellised leaves, whose everlasting hues
Outvied the rainbow's soon-dissolving tints—
Such power of foresight on the angels came.



While loving fingers twined the fadeless wreaths
For poor earth-weary heads, a hymn arose
From choral voices, blended with soft strains
Of heart-subduing music, pensive and low.
As when from some cathedral, on a calm
And moon-lit night, the solemn chant is heard
Low-sung within it : if a door be opened,
Sudden the swelling anthem gushes forth ;
Then, as the portal closes, dies away
In cadence faint—so from that sacred throng
Came broken echoes of their melody
Across the far-reaching gulf. The outcast King
Heard on his mountain snatches of the song.

(The various songs of Heaven discord none
Can make, though all at once their mingled notes
Ascend—so nicely doth each part accord
With other, and are interwoven all
In one supernal, everlasting Hymn :
As the four voices of the sweet quartet,
Though diverse, fall harmonious on the ear.)

Fast as the crowns were woven, they were brought
And meekly laid at the Redeemer's feet :
For none but his nail-scarred hand might number forth
The stars for each, and set them in their place.
All-wise and all-foreseeing, he discerned
The millions yet unborn, his dear-loved saints,
Destined to wear those circlets ; and a smile



Passed o'er his features when he dropped a crown
 Well filled with gems : but oh ! what looks of pity
 And tender sadness shaded o'er his face,
 Whene'er a crown fell from his generous hand
 Without a single star to gild its front !

At last the work was finished : and with shouts
 The crowns were gathered by unwearied hands
 Into God's treasury, there to await
 The final Day, and the last trumpet's sound :
 But one was gathered fairer than the rest,
 A glorious wreath ! and destined for that Head
 Which once, in love for Man, a diadem
 Endured of thorns. When the departing skies
 Shall roll together, and the great white throne
 Appear in Heaven, then his waking saints
 With cries of victory shall ascend on high
 To meet the Bridegroom ; crown him with that wreath :
 And, while the City flashes every gem,
 Rejoicing greatly, from his piercèd hand
 Receive their own, and enter to the feast.

Christ now descended to his car ; and all
 The elated millions following in bright train,
 Departed from the City. As they poured
 Out from her twelve-fold gates, a guard was left
 Within those shining portals, there to hinder
 Entrance of evil spirits, till the end
 Of time, and resurrection of the dead.

BOOK IV.

ARGUMENT.

Satan discovers, at the left-hand of the Orb of God, a lake of fire and brimstone.—The Beast and the False Prophet are there foreshadowed: also the rejected Jews and heathen nations.—The phantom Serpent.—Satan, becoming alarmed at the scene, loses his self-possession, and God decrees his fall from the Mount.—His second descension into Hell is witnessed by Heaven and Earth.—Michael, standing on the Mount with his company, addresses the Deity in a psalm of praise.

BOOK IV.

SATAN from his exalted mountain seat
Beheld these glories at the right-hand of God
In high absorbent mood ; he scarce relaxed
The steadfast vigil, till by saddened thoughts
His eyes were turned away. But by that chance
(Or providence, for God doth govern all),
His vision swept the left-hand of the Orb,
Where a great horror of darkness met his view.

A sable cloud above that region hung,
The pall of a dead world, whose solemn folds
Were whirled about by the careering winds
In dreadful warfare. 'Neath the sable cloud
Uncasy rolled a lake of fire, whose waves
Reached up and lapped the frowning sky. Beneath
The red lake's broken foam, the shadowy round
Of a great valley stretched : and Satan's eye,
Keen-searching far within its crimson depths,
Discovered, that along those buried plains
Dim cities lay, their minarets and towers
Swept over by the leaping spray of fire.



As yet no evil spirit had set his foot
In that dark world : it stood in readiness
For the last trumpet's all-awakening sound,
Calling Life and Death before the judgment-throne.

The wide-extended regions of the north
Were covered by the Beast whose clammy wings
Dripped with the blood of saints. Cathedrals rose
Within a skeleton Rome : and from their spires
Shone forth the sacred cross—as if to mock
The vanity of ceremonial rite
And pageant gay, where Mercy's pleading voice
Is drowned in her own blood. The loathesome Beast
Encircled with his tented wings all souls
Whose hope of Heaven rested on their works
Or empty forms.

The False Prophet on the east
His seat of empire held, where his proud mosques
And minarets, in oriental pomp,
Obscurely rose. He, like the Beast, had dipped
His sword in blood : and now forever here
Mahomet and his dusky followers
Must battle without hope the quenchless fires.



In the far south the camp of Israel spread,
Their naked and forsaken tents deprived
Of the bright hallowed cloud which led them forth,
In days of old, from the Egyptian's land.
A lofty temple from a city rose,
No more illuminated by the light
Of God's own presence, but instead thereof
Was hung with whirling pillars of smoke and fire.

The burning plains and cities of the west
Were portioned to the heathen gods, and all
Who on the Earth despised religion's cause.
Great Babylon the fallen there displayed
Her hideous idols ; and the gods of Greece
Were brought to open shame. Dark Mexico—
Not the least lightened of the misled host—
Reared up her ugly deities, and strove
With foolish vanities of every age
And nation, for the prize of cruelty.
The devils that deceived them also shared
A place of habitation in their midst ;
But nevermore to work deception, bound
In chains of torment lasting as their death.
The quaint pagodas of the Buddhist tribes
Rose from a thousand cities ; and the sparks
Of the loud-roaring lake passed over them.



As when the angry billows of the sea
Dash up against a lighthouse tall and break
In spray above its top. Each temple's roof
Was hung with bells ; and they in discord strange.
Rung by the wind, sounded their dread alarms
Over the storm-swept waste. Ring on, wild bells !
Your vain, inglorious notes will ne'er be heard
Save by the spirits lost. Ye are to them
A solemn knell of death : but never tones
Like those will reach the City blest of God.

These four divisions of the fallen host
Formed an enormous square ; and from its depth
The monster phantom of a Serpent rose,
Whose head majestic moved near the dark cloud.
And whose keen-searching eye, full of unrest,
Found in that valley accurst no spot of peace.
His writhing coil attested endless pain
Cast on him from the lake—such place ordained
Eternal Justice as his prison dire.

Above the Serpent's head, with voice of thunder,
The sharp and glittering bayonets of the storm
Pierced the black-pillared clouds, and on their front
In forkèd letters wove the terrible word
PERDITION. High in heaven it flamed, a sign
Of second death, and God's insulted law.



When Satan from his eminence beheld
This solemn scene, the consciousness of sin
And dread of coming judgment on his deeds
Rose up before him, like a tempest-cloud
Rushing above the sun and darkening all
Beneath it. Such a load of dull despair
Pressed on his soul, as would have crushed him quite.
Had he not summoned all his courage firm
To withstand the growing weight. But, ah, how weak
Is spirit when at enmity with God!
With all his strength he opposed the mightier Will
Which now decreed his fall; until at last
The weight of condemnation on him pressed
With such enormous power, he yielded up
His strength to Heaven, and gave a piercing cry
Of such unearthly bitterness, it rent
The sacred air and dazed angelic choirs.
Perdition started back, and all her deeps
Echoed his wail of "Lost, forever lost!"

The King of Darkness toppling from the Mount
All Heaven beheld; and as with frightful speed
He shot headlong far down the dread abyss,
The flaming bolts of wrath hurled after him
Played fast their lightnings round, and hurried on



His swift descent to Hell. The nations saw
His fall precipitate from the far Earth,
Conjecturing wide ; and with a guilty fear
The dwellers in Jerusalem, at night,
Beheld him as a comet stretched across
The western sky. Judea as a leaf
Trembled at naught, and started at the least
Faint whisper. In their superstitious dread
They heard already in the mountain tops
The rush of many chariots : trumpets blown
On all sides of their cities, threatening war :
And, looking in each other's faces, read :
“ His blood is on us, and our seed, for aye.”

The vanquished Monarch crashing into Hell
Frightened that drear abode : the dark angels fled
In diverse rout, expectant of more doom
(For Christ, ere he ascended, swept through Hell,
Led Death in chains, and laid their City waste) :
But that unmerring Providence, which rules
Mysterious to our judgment, suffered not
The utter destruction of our greatest foe.
The Stygian lake received him with a hiss,
Where, stunned and motionless, but not extinct,
He for a time was doomed to lie. All Hell
Was horribly confounded, and no sound
Was heard through all the chambers of the deep.



At once the warrior-angel Michael
Stood on Mount Sion with his company,
And to the symphony of their kindling harps
Exclaimed with loud voice :

“ How awful are thy judgments.
Lord God Almighty ! Thou that sittest throned,
And wrapped about with clouds that veil thy face,
Lest by its full light we perish ! Worlds upon worlds
Like silver balls roll from thine outstretched palm
Into the boundless deep ; and thou dost mark
Them in their flight tremendous : and thine ear
Is bent, well pleased, and listens to their song.
Thou hearest the hum of voices and the march
Of growing millions on the wheeling spheres :
Thou seest nations rise and fall and rise
In fast increasing power on the Earth :
Where still the clash and din of horrid war
Resounds—the war of Good against the Evil ;
The Good, how small an army ! and how vast
The legions of Apostasy ! But thou,
Unmoved upon thy bow-encircled throne,
Look’st down with dreadful calmness on the scene,
Expecting ! As the ages roll away,
And Justice, lingering, holds aloft her blade,
The swarms of Hell, grown bold and reckless, draw



Yet nearer thy throne, and hiss defiant threats,
Daring thy wrath ! Simply the veil withdrawn
That shades thy face, the blind-struck demons flee
In precipitate confusion and dismay,
High above all, unsearchable and dark,
The great eternal PURPOSE marches on
To victory, amid angelic songs."

THE END.

NOTE.

As the lyric poems of the author (which were recited on several occasions) have been asked for in book form, one of them will soon be published.

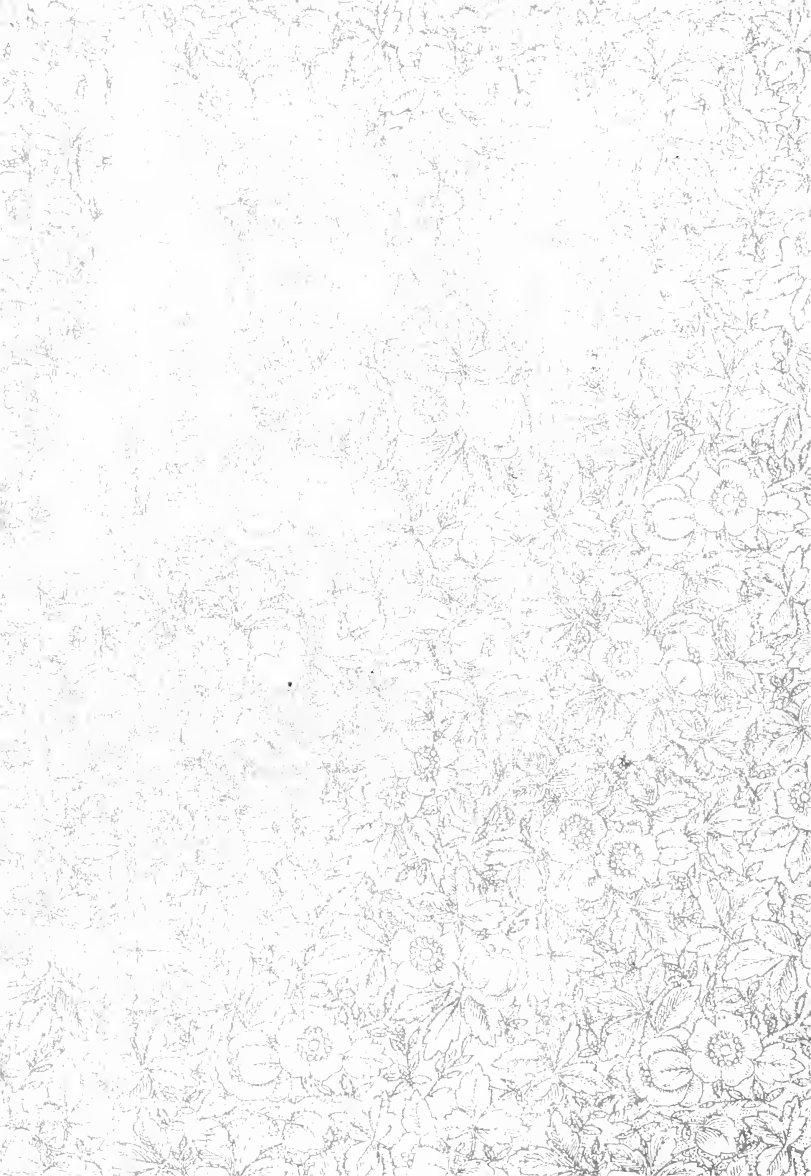
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